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JANUARY 20, 2017

Dear Friends,

Here is the 189th issue of our weekly gardening newsletter for Houston, the Gulf Coast and beyond. We really appreciate all of our readers hanging in there with us, sharing stories and inspiring us in so many ways.

Thanks so much!

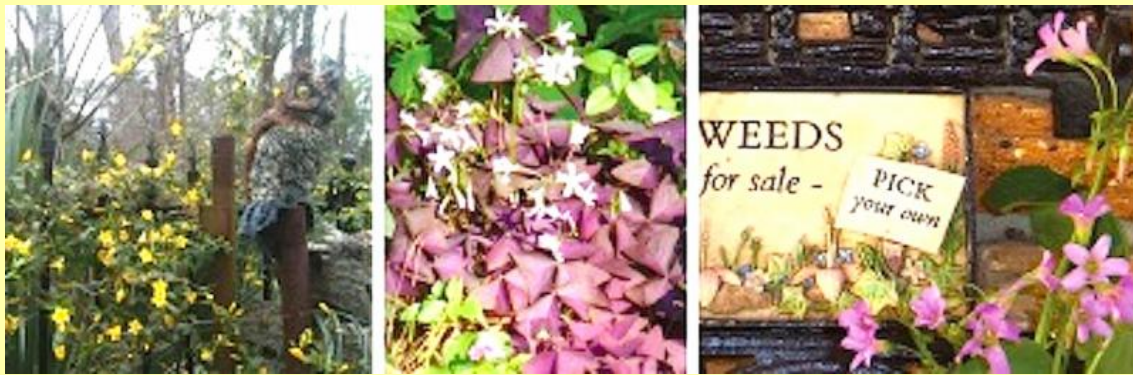
This newsletter is a project of The Lazy Gardener, Brenda Beust Smith, John Ferguson and Mark Bowen (John and Mark are with Nature's Way Resources). We also have a great supporting cast of contributing writers and technical specialists who will chime in and tweak away regularly. We would love to keep receiving your input on this newsletter . . . comments . . . suggestions . . . questions. . . E mail your thoughts to: [lazygardenerandfriends@gmail.com](mailto:lazygardenerandfriends@gmail.com). Thanks so much for your interest.

Please [click here](#) or sign yourself up to receive this newsletter by clicking the "Join Our Mailing List" link just below. We will never sell or share our mailing list to protect the privacy of our subscribers.

Enjoy!

[JOIN OUR MAILING LIST!](#)

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## CRAZY SURPRISES . . . PREDICTING SURVIVAL . . . TIME TO THINK ABOUT BIRDS!

**By BRENDA BEUST SMITH**

In the interest of accurate journalism, these are NOT current pictures, above. But they are plants of mine that -- ta da -- now have flowers -- albeit just a few -- on them . . . much to my surprise and delight.

Normally I don't see these colors until February. So just want to say "Hello!" and "Thanks!" for making an appearance this dreary, soggy, roller-coaster January to my good friends, left to right, Carolina jessamine, purple oxalis and even to its ubiquitous cousin, pink oxalis. Thanks for popping out!

For those of you with flooded yards on top of frozen gardens, wish I had words of wisdom about whether or not your plants will survive. I don't.

But I can tell you this. Those that do survive, come back out in spring (be patient!) and strut their stuff (even albeit a bit less than usual) will DEFINITELY qualify as Lazy Gardener Plants!

I'll want to hear about them!

The extra water is good, if we go into another subfreezing period. Hydrated roots are far more likely to survive temperatures down into the 20s than dehydrated roots.

What else to do? Nothing except make sure all your mulch didn't wash away. If it did, or if you haven't mulched yet, do so. Pile on those leaves your neighbors set out for the garbage. Mulch works well to keep soil temperatures higher than the surrounding air temperatures.

Don't fertilize. Traumatized roots don't need fertilizing, which stimulates growth. They need to recuperate from the trauma and remain dormant for any upcoming freezes.

\* \* \*

As far as I'm concerned, there are only two good things about winter:

1. clothes don't stink if I forget to transfer them from washer to dryer.
2. birds are so much easier to see in the dead branches of garden plants.

Birds and other beneficial wildlife are attracted to dead/dying foliage for security, perches, plus berries and insects to be found among those black leaves, stalks & branches. That's why I leave them on! (And, ok, it's easier than cutting them all off.)

My wonderful late friend Sally McQueen Squire used to lecture on "Bare Bones Landscaping" in winter. At this point, she'd say, with all the died-back plants, it's easier to see garden "bones" of your yard -- unchangeable basic aspects, strong points and obvious limitations. Great project for a cold and/or wet day: a good long hard looks at your gardens.

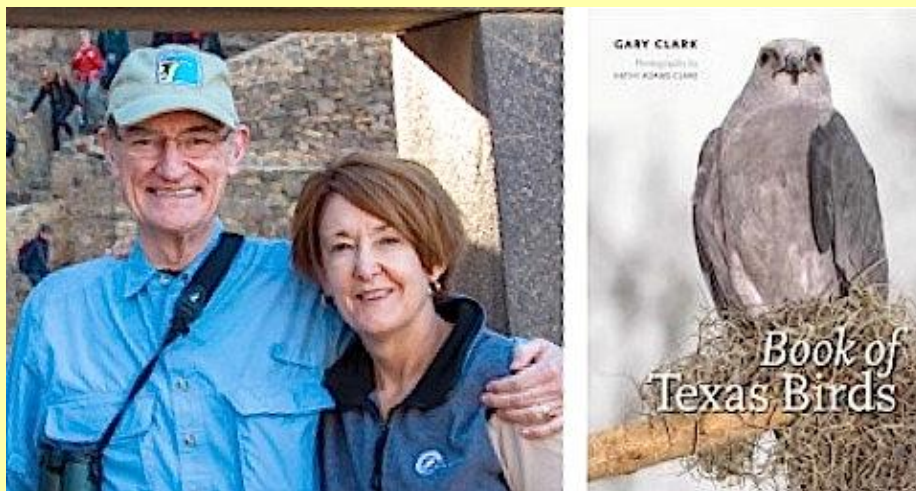
Don't think it terms of actual plants. That's the LAST step. The first step is to think in terms of shapes. What shapes do you visualize for maximum enjoyment? Need to hide a neighbor's house? Or at least their window views? Maybe an unattractive off-site view? What shapes would accomplish your ideal look?

Do some rough sketches just using shapes for now. Later you can fill in the plants. You'll probably change your mind a million times between now and spring.

\* \* \*

If bringing more birds and other winged treasures to your garden is one goal, our Spotlight article below should help. Noted naturalist and photographer Kathy Adams Clark offers a preview of a free and open-to-public program she'll be presenting February 2 to the Nottingham Country Club Garden Club (10am, MUD Building, 805 Hidden Canyon Dr., Katy. Details: [nottinghamgardenclub.org](http://nottinghamgardenclub.org)).

Kathy (below right) and her husband, Chronicle Nature columnist Gary Clark, have together contributed in ways almost too numerous to list to the proliferation of habitat gardens in area backyards, schools, parks, throughout this area. If you don't have their "Backroads of Texas" and "Book of Texas Birds," your nature/gardening library isn't complete.



\* \* \*

Before we get to Kathy's helpful tips below, one personal note and couple of reader questions and answers:

**YOU WILL BE SO MISSED, TERRY HERSHEY:** One of my lifetime heroes, Terry Hershey, has left us, but will never be forgotten. I think of her every time I drive through Memorial Park, how she fought and fought so many powers-that-be to help preserve that incredible treasure, and to make our bayous a place of beauty and logical-live-with-nature attributes instead of concrete-paved bathtubs running through the city. If you missed the Chronicle article, hope you can click on this clink: [Terry Hershey, Houston Environmentalist Who Saved Buffalo Bayou Dies at 94.](#)

**MICROGREENS & GNATS.** In response to Jacob Martin's great "Microgreens" article last week, MARY in Woodville, asked how does one grow microgreens indoors without ending up with an infestation of gnats? She's gone the insect sticky-strips route and finally had to move all houseplants outdoors.

JACOB MARTIN replied: *I grow most of the microgreens in hoop huts and outside. I have never had a problem with gnats but from past experience I have learned a couple ways to deal with them*

- *Some potting soils are way more prone to the gnats. Perhaps eggs are already present? Try switching soils.*
- *Treat the soil with horticulture molasses. This helps feed the plants and slow down gnat infestation by affecting their eggs.*
- *Topdress any pots you have with sand. Gnats cannot lay eggs in the sand.*
- *Air circulation will also help control the problem. A little fan can really make a big difference.*

\* \* \*

**QUEEN PALM FERTILIZING** A reader with a queen palm said she was told to fertilize once a month, even through winter. I usually ask a variety of experts when I don't feel qualified to answer on specific plants. Two great guys came through on this one: Harris County Horticulture Agent Skip Richter and Galveston County Master Gardener O. J. Miller, a frequent lecturer on palm culture.

While no reliable research they could find addresses specifically the fertilization of queen palms in Texas, a general recommendation is to wait to start a fertilizer program until danger of frost has passed, usually March or early April.

Feeding in winter could trigger new growth that could be damaged by cold weather. If the bud (where fronds emerge) is killed, the palm is dead.

When you do start feeding, they recommend a palm fertilizer, as most palms need specific trace elements. Some experts recommend a monthly feeding, some feeding every three months, perhaps skipping August. Whatever you do, always follow the specific prescribed directions that come with individual fertilizers.

The Palm Society of South Texas is an informal but steadily growing organization. Log onto [palmsocietysouthtexas.org](http://palmsocietysouthtexas.org) for membership details.

(Note: O. J. will be speaking on palm growing in the Galveston County area in February. Check the [Galveston County Master Gardener](#) website for details.)

\* \* \*

**TO THOSE OF YOU WHO SEND IN EVENT NOTICES . . . CHECK OUT THE CALENDAR BELOW.**

**Events submitted in our EXACT FORMAT, so I can copy and paste them immediately into the calendar, will much sooner than those that have to be retyped & reformatted.**

**Events NOT submitted in our exact format may not be used until shortly before the event date.**

**All calendar items use the exact same format. No exceptions. See calendar below.**

**Make sure whoever sends in your notices sees this info. Thanks. Brenda**

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*Left, birds need water to bath and drink. They like a birdbath with an inch of water and a rough, natural surface. Right, yaupon and other natives make great plantings around bird feeders and baths.*

## ATTRACTING BIRDS AND BUTTERFLIES TO YOUR BACKYARD BY KATHY ADAMS CLARK

[www.kathyadamsclark.com](http://www.kathyadamsclark.com)

Gardens big or small can be a haven for birds. Birds will come to a large lot with trees and grass or a balcony with container plants.

- Birds need three things
  - Food
  - Water
  - Shelter

Food is the first big consideration to bringing birds into your garden. Shelled sunflower seeds are a favorite because the hulls have been removed and no waste falls to the ground to attract mice and rats. Shelled sunflower seed is a bit more expensive but the food goes farther because there is no waste. Avoid packaged birdfeed that contain millet, milo, and wheat. Watch for little white seeds common in grocery store wild bird feed. Northern cardinals, blue jays, and Carolina chickadee don't eat these seeds. Blackbird and grackles do, though.

- Birdfeed from area nature stores such as Wild Bird Unlimited, feed stores, and locally owned garden centers is usually fresher than feed from big box stores.

Birds like suet. Suet is a mixture of seeds, nuts, and fruit held together with a peanut butter matrix. Carolina wrens, pine warblers, and red-bellied woodpeckers love suet cakes.

- Avoid suet cakes held together with a whitish or fat-based matrix.
- Those spoil in our heat.
- They are designed for cooler, northern climates.

Bird baths are a great way to add water to your habitat.

- Traditional concrete bird baths are best.
- Birds only need an inch of water to drink or bath.
- Concrete bird baths last twenty or more years.

The rough surface of a concrete bird bath gives birds something they can grip in the event they need to quickly fly away to avoid a predator. Glass or ceramic bird baths are pretty but the bathing area needs to be rough. Toss in a few handfuls of dirt and let a bit of algae grow. This creates a natural surface birds prefer.



*Left, shelled sunflower seed has minimal waste and attracts a variety of birds including red-bellied woodpeckers. Right, nest boxes with no perch or ornaments are a great way to provide shelter for birds during the nesting season. Perches and ornaments give predators a grip so they can predate the nest. Kathy Adams Clark photos*

Shelter is the last item needed. Birds need a place to hide when a hawk or cat enters the area.

Place feeders and birdbaths five to ten feet from a tree, shrub, or potted plant. Birds won't cross a vast open area to feed or bathe. Place plants on two sides to create an ideal habitat.

- Consider natives when planting around feeders in a yard or on a balcony.
  - Yaupon
  - American beautyberry
  - Golden dewdrop (Duranta)
  - Porterweed (Stachytarpheta)

\* \* \*

Contact Kathy Adams Clark at [www.kathyadamsclark.com](http://www.kathyadamsclark.com), or visit with her in person at:

**THURS., FEB. 2: ATTRACTING BIRDS AND BUTTERFLIES TO YOUR BACKYARD BY KATHY ADAMS CLARK, 10am, MUD Building, 805 Hidden Canyon Dr, Katy. Free, Nottingham Country Garden Club event. [nottinghamgardenclub.org](http://nottinghamgardenclub.org).**

## JOHN'S CORNER

### MINERALS - The Elements and What They Do Part 10

**17) Chlorine (Cl) - Chlorine is found in igneous rocks at 130 ppm, shale at 180 ppm, limestone at 150 ppm, sandstone at 10 ppm, fresh water at 7 ppm, sea water at 19,000 ppm, marine plants at 4,700 ppm, land plants at 2,000 ppm and land animals at 2,800 ppm. Most soils only have around 100 ppm of chlorine.**

If you notice that chlorine is found in the same column on the periodic table as fluorine (F) and bromine (Br), hence it has very similar chemical properties and is highly reactive.

Chlorine is an element where small amounts are essential to health from microbes, plants, animals, and humans and too much is toxic.

Chlorine exists as a molecule in the form of two chlorine atoms that are coupled ( $\text{Cl}_2$ ) which is extremely reactive and dangerous. It is a dense greenish-yellow gas with a sharp pungent smell. Chlorine is extremely reactive and will form compounds with all elements except the noble gases. Chloride is a chlorine atom that has a negative electrical charge ( $\text{Cl}^-$ ) which is stable and relatively safe. Chlorine is commonly found in nature as Halite (rock salt) which is sodium chloride ( $\text{NaCl}$ ) and is the main source of chlorine for all living organisms.

Chlorine is essential for all living species, used in electrochemical and catalytic functions, activates numerous enzyme functions, and raw material our digestive system uses to make stomach acid which is hydrochloric acid ( $\text{HCl}$ ). It is required for vitamin B-12 absorption.

Chlorinated lime or calcium hypochlorite  $\text{Ca}(\text{ClO})_2$  was one of the first disinfectants used by doctors to wash their hands between patients, reducing mortalities by 90% after it started being used. Chlorine is the most common disinfectant used in public water systems.

Chlorine is required to make plastics like (PVC) poly vinyl chloride  $(\text{CH}_2\text{CHCl})_n$  which is long chains of carbon atoms with a chlorine atom attached to every other one. Chlorine is used in the manufacture of hundreds of products.

Chlorine gas ( $\text{Cl}_2$ ) was used as a chemical weapon in WW-I due to its extreme toxicity, as it effectively attacks all living cells (both good and bad). It starts attacking eyes and lungs in concentrations as low as 3 ppm. Studies have found that our white blood cells use chlorine gas to fight infections. When we drink chlorinated water, it kills the good bacteria in our stomachs leading to many intestinal disorders. Reports in the Journal Scientific American have linked chlorine in public water systems to rectal and breast cancer.

Exposure to chlorine diminishes vitamin E, vitamin C, and polyunsaturated fatty acids in our skin that makes one more sensitive to eye and skin irritations. It often leads to dry skin issues.

Chlorine is an active ingredient in bleach, in the form sodium hypochlorite ( $\text{NaOCl}$ ). Chlorine dioxide ( $\text{ClO}_2$ ) is used in bleaching paper pulp or white flour. It is a major ingredient in pesticides, fungicides, other chlorinated compounds like dioxin/furans and PCB's. Many other cancer-causing chemicals have chlorine in them. Women with breast cancer have 50-60% higher levels of organochlorines (chlorine by-products) in their breast tissue than women whom are cancer free. People whom bath in chlorinated water have a significantly higher risk of bladder cancer and people whom swim in chlorinated water have higher risks of asthma and allergies.

If we combine chlorine with ammonia, we get chloramines ( monochloramine ( $\text{NH}_2\text{Cl}$ ), dichloramine ( $\text{NHCl}_2$ ), trichloramine ( $\text{NCl}_3$ )) depending on the acidity of the water. Chloramines are known to cause cancer in rats and the byproducts of chloramines are more toxic than those of chlorine. See Citizens Concerned About Chloramine (CCAC) <http://www.chloramine.org> for a more detailed list of health effects.

Chlorine in its anion form chloride readily combines with copper (Cu), mercury (Hg), zinc (Zn), lead (Pb), cadmium (Cd) and other heavy metals and makes them soluble and easier to absorb.  
Gardening and Landscaping Problems Associated with Chlorine (Cl)

Chlorine levels in soils are low compared to other elements and they tend to decrease as one moves inland away from the coastline.

Chlorine is used in the process of photosynthesis; it raises osmotic pressure that affects the stomata, increases the hydration of plant tissue, believed to be related to the suppression of leaf spot and take-all diseases. It is considered an essential element for plants where it concentrates in the chloroplasts. Cereal grains absorb very little chlorine (10-20 ppm) while potatoes can contain over 5,000 ppm.

If chlorine levels in the soil drop below 2 ppm plant growth will suffer (extremely rare). Plants deficient in chlorine exhibit chlorosis of younger leaves and wilting of the plant. Plants that are deficient in chlorine are more likely to develop the disease "take-all".

If chlorine levels reach only 700 ppm in the soil, many plants begin to suffer (beans, apples, etc). Other plants like tobacco, tomatoes, cotton can tolerate levels as high as 3,000 ppm before suffering damage.

It is an essential growth element as it influences plant growth in several ways but not fully understood. Chlorine is required for strong stalks, it stimulates crops to grow, required for disease resistance, plays a role in photosynthesis, and regulates water movement in plants. Plants can absorb chloride by their roots or leaves.

Chlorine inhibits the growth of many microorganisms in the soil that help plants grow by disturbing their biological activity. Too much chloride (most common form is sodium chloride) in soil prevent plants from absorbing water.

Chlorine exists in the soil solution as chloride anion ( $\text{Cl}^-$ ), thus the chloride anion competes with other anions required by plants. Too much chloride (think salt) in the soil prevents required nutrients like nitrate ( $\text{NO}_3^-$ ) and sulfate ( $\text{SO}_4^{2-}$ ) from being absorbed by plants, which starves them, making them more susceptible to insects and disease.

One of the most toxic forms of chlorine in landscaping and gardening is chloramines from our public water systems. Chloramines are highly toxic to fish, amphibians and other aquatic life forms (Note - Canada's EPA has ruled chloramines as toxic). If one overwaters their landscape, the water will enter our streams and may cause fish kills. If one has a pond in their landscape it may kill your fish as water from irrigation collects in the pond. Chloramines in the runoff from broken water mains enter our storm sewers and into our rivers and streams which kills the minnows and crayfish that eat the mosquito eggs and larva aggravating the mosquito problem.

Chloramines make the water acidic, which over time can change our soil pH. This may result in nutrient tie-up and create yellowing (chlorosis) problems in many plants. Chloramines prevent the absorption of other nutrients, which also may lead to yellowing.



The action of chlorine and chloramines kill bacteria both good and bad. Many good bacteria that live in the soil control fungal diseases. When we lose these good bacteria there is no natural control and turf grass diseases like "Brown Patch, Take All and St. Augustine Decline" become rampant. In other words the more one waters, the greater the chance that one will experience disease problems in their grass and other plants.

Chlorine and chloramines kill the nitrifying bacteria that fix nitrogen from the air into the soil. Hence, additional nitrogen must be supplied to the plants to replace the loss of free nitrogen from nature. Container plants (hanging baskets, pots, etc.) are more susceptible to damage from chloramines as they tend to require more watering. Other studies have shown that chloramines hurt the germination of seeds from many species of plants. Another problem caused by using artificial fertilizers is that chloramines can also be formed in the soil when ammonia (from artificial fertilizers, animal manures, pesticides, etc.) is combined with chlorine in the water.

Chloramines is neutralized in the soil by chemical reactions with organic matter (humus) which is destroyed in the process. Organic matter in the form of humus can hold 15 times its weight in water, hence every time we water with municipal water, the soil loses some of its ability to hold and store water. Chloramines hurt the production of compost tea as it kills off some of the microbial species that one is trying to grow to high densities. Note: One teaspoon of humic acid (liquid form of humate) can neutralize the chloramines in 100 gallons of water depending on the exact concentration of chloramines.

Using high humus products like a quality compost, native mulches (that have been composted) and humate in ones landscape is the easiest way to minimize the damage from chloramines and chlorine. This ensures that even if some of the organic matter is destroyed and some of the beneficial microbes are killed, there is plenty left over so the soil life can quickly regenerate and prevent problems.

#### Sources:

Chloride toxicity often occurs after application of potassium chloride (KCl) which is also known as muriate of potash and used in artificial fertilizers. Dairy and feedlot manure can have 50,000-100,000 ppm of salt (sodium chloride). Most poultry manure is another source of salt along with sewage sludge (bio-solids). Spent mushroom substrate (mushroom compost) is generally very high in salt but it varies greatly around the world. Other sources include manure based compost, Biosolids compost, municipal water supplies, artificial fertilizers, some organic fertilizers made from poultry manure, thunderstorms and storm water run-off from roads treated with salt, burning coal, and ammonium chloride ( $\text{NH}_4\text{Cl}$ ) is also used in artificial fertilizers.

\* \* \*

## WEEKLY GARDENING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS CALENDAR

### PLEASE READ BEFORE SUBMITTING AN EVENT TO THIS CALENDAR.

Events **NOT** submitted in the **EXACT** written format below may take two weeks or longer to be reformatted/retyped. After that point, if your event does not appear, please email us. Sorry, no children's programs. - Submit to: [lazygardener@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lazygardener@sbcglobal.net)

**IF WE INSPIRE YOU TO ATTEND ANY OF THESE EVENTS,  
PLEASE TELL SPONSORS YOU HEARD ABOUT IT IN  
THE LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER**

SAT., JAN. 21: FRUIT & NUT TREES: PRUNING TO PLANTING!, 9-11am, Montgomery Co. AgriLife Extension Office, 9020 Airport Road, Conroe. \$5. Master Gardener event. 936-539-7824; [mcmga.com](http://mcmga.com)

MON., JAN 23-FEB. 27: TEXAS GULF COAST GARDENER TIER III: THE ART OF LANDSCAPE DESIGN, 9am-3pm. Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. \$250. Register: 713-274-4160.

WED., JAN. 25: "SUCCULENT GARDENING PROJECTS AND TIPS FROM MERCER ARBORETUM by JACOB MARTIN, 7:30 p.m., Metropolitan Multi-Services Center, 1475 West Gray, Free. [hcss.tex.org](http://hcss.tex.org).

THURS., JAN. 26: RIGHT TREE RIGHT PLACE - DON'T OVERPLANT by LINDA GAY, 10am, The Arbor Gate, 15635 FM 2920, Tomball. Free but register: [arborgate.com](http://arborgate.com)

SAT, JAN 28: GROWING PEACHES IN GALVESTON COUNTY by HERMAN AUER, 9-11 am & KITCHEN GARDENING by MARY DEMENY, 1-3 pm, AgriLife Extension, Carbide Park, 4102-B Main, La Marque. Master Gardener events. Free, but register: [galvcountrymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountrymgs@gmail.com), 281-534-3413, [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)

SAT. JAN. 28: MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENER FRUIT & NUT TREE SALE, 8 am presentation, 9am-noon sale, AgriLife Extension Office, 9020 Airport Rd, Conroe. 936-539-7824; [mcmga.com](http://mcmga.com)

SAT, JAN 28: GROWING PEACHES IN GALVESTON COUNTY by HERMAN AUER, 9-11am & KITCHEN GARDENING by MARY DEMENY, 1-3pm, AgriLife Extension, Carbide Park, 4102-B Main, La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener events. Free, but pre-register: [galvcountrymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountrymgs@gmail.com), 281-534-3413, [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)

SAT., JAN. 28: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER FRUIT TREE SALE, Bear Creek Garden, 3033 Bear Creek Dr. 281-855-5600

SAT., JAN. 28: BUILD A BED with SCOTT SNODGRASS - Enchanted Forest 10am - 10611 FM 2759, Richmond (281) 937-9449 - Enchanted Gardens 2pm - 6420 FM 359 - (281) 341-1206 Free. [Myenchanted.com](http://Myenchanted.com)

SAT., JAN. 28: WALLER COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS EXTENDED FRUIT & NUT TREE SALE. 10am-2pm. Programs by BILL ADAMS at 9 am & at 11am. Tegeler Used Cars lot, 850 Bus. Hwy. 290, Hempstead. 979-826-7651; [txmg.org/wallermg](http://txmg.org/wallermg)

SAT., JAN. 28: WALLER COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS EXTENDED FRUIT & NUT TREE SALE. 10am-2pm. Programs by BILL ADAMS at 9 am & at 11am. Tegeler Used Cars lot, 850 Bus. Hwy. 290, Hempstead. 979-826-7651; [txmg.org/wallermg](http://txmg.org/wallermg)

SUN., JAN. 29: SUSTAINABLE LIVING THROUGH PERMACULTURE by Permaculture Guild of Houston, 12:30-5pm, University of Houston Central Campus. \$50. Urban Harvest event. [urbanharvest.org](http://urbanharvest.org). Click on "Classes."

TUE, JAN 31: ANYONE CAN GROW ROSES by JOHN JONS, 6:30-8:30 pm; AgriLife Extension, Carbide Park, 4102-B Main, La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener events. Free, but pre-register: [galvcountrymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcountrymgs@gmail.com), 281-534-3413, [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)

WED., FEB. 1: BALANCE IN GARDEN DESIGN - PLAN BEFORE YOU PLANT by KAREN LEHR, 9am. C.L. United Methodist Church, 16635 El Camino Real. Free. Gardeners By The Bay event. Marjorie, 281-474-5051.

THURS., FEB. 2 : ATTRACTING BIRDS AND BUTTERFLIES TO YOUR BACKYARD BY KATHY ADAMS CLARK, 1 0am , MUD Building, 805 Hidden Canyon Dr, Katy. Free. Nottingham Country Garden Club event. [nottinghamgardenclub.org](http://nottinghamgardenclub.org)

THURS., FEB. 2: ORNAMENTAL SHRUBS by LINDA GAY, 10am, The Arbor Gate, 15635 FM 2920, Tomball. Free but register: [arborgate.com](http://arborgate.com)

THURS., FEB. 2: STROLLER STROLLS, 9am, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160.

SAT. FEB 4: GROW YOUR OWN FRUIT with John Panzarella, Enchanted Forest 10am - 10611 FM 2759, Richmond - 281-937-9449; Enchanted Gardens 2pm - 6420 FM 359, Richmond - 281-341-1206 Free. [Myenchanted.com](http://Myenchanted.com)

SAT, FEB 4: GROWING CITRUS IN YOUR BACKYARD by ROBERT MARSHALL, 9-11:30 am, & GROWING BLUEBERRIES by DAVID COHEN, 1-2:30 pm, AgriLife Extension, Carbide Park, 4102-B Main, La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener events. Free, but register: [galvcounnymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcounnymgs@gmail.com), 281-534-3413, [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)

WED., FEB. 8: MICROGREENS, noon - 2pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160.

THURS., FEB. 9: ROSE PRUNING DONE RIGHT by HRS CONSULTING ROSARIANS, 7:30pm, St. Andrews Episcopal Church, 1819 Heights Blvd. Free. Houston Rose Society event. [houstonrose.org](http://houstonrose.org)

THURS., FEB. 9: CONTAINER GARDENING: THRILLER, FILLER & SPILLER, OH MY! by LINDA GAY, 10am, The Arbor Gate, 15635 FM 2920, Tomball. Free but register: [arborgate.com](http://arborgate.com)

FRI., FEB.10: FLORAL DESIGN INSPIRED BY ART by HOUSTON DESIGNING WOMEN, 10am, White Oak Convention Center, 7603 Antoine. Free. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs event. [houstonfederationgardenclubs.org](http://houstonfederationgardenclubs.org)

MON, FEB. 13: MONARCHS & MILKWEED by BARBARA WILLY, 6:30pm, Forest Room (BB1418), Bayou Building, University of Houston Clear Lake, 2700 Bay Area Blvd. Free. \$5 parking. Native Plant Society of Texas (NPSOT)/Clear Lake Chapter event. [npsot.org/wp/clearlake/](http://npsot.org/wp/clearlake/)

SAT, FEB 11: GROWING AVOCADO & PAPAYA by JERRY HURLBERT, 9-11:30 am, & SOIL HEALTH & EVALUATION by JIM GILLIAM, 1-2:30 pm, AgriLife Extension, Carbide Park, 4102-B Main, La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Free, but register: [galvcounnymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcounnymgs@gmail.com), 281-534-3413, [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)

SAT., FEB. 11: ROSE PRUNING with GAYE HAMMOND, Enchanted Forest 10am - 10611 FM 2759, Richmond - 281-937-9449; Enchanted Gardens 2pm - 6420 FM 359, Richmond - 281-341-1206 Free. [Myenchanted.com](http://Myenchanted.com)

MON, FEB. 13: MONARCHS & MILKWEED by BARBARA WILLY, 6:30pm, Forest Room (BB1418), Bayou Building, University of Houston Clear Lake, 2700 Bay Area Blvd. Free. \$5 parking. Native Plant Society of Texas (NPSOT)/Clear Lake Chapter event. [npsot.org/wp/clearlake/](http://npsot.org/wp/clearlake/)

THU, FEB 16: PRUNING ROSES by JOHN JONS, 9-10am, AgriLife Research & Demonstration Garden, 4102 Main, La Marque. Galveston County Master Gardener event. Free, but register: [galvcounnymgs@gmail.com](mailto:galvcounnymgs@gmail.com), 281-534-3413, [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)

SAT, FEB 18: GALVESTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS ANNUAL SPRING FRUIT & CITRUS TREE, VEGETABLE & PLANT SALE. Pre-Sale Seminar 8am; Sale 9am-1pm. Jack Brooks Park Rodeo Arena, 10 Jack Brooks Rd and Hwy 6, Hitchcock. [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)

SAT., FEB. 18: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER PRECINCT 2 FRUIT TREE AND TOMATO SALE, Campbell Hall. Pasadena Fairgrounds, 7600 Red Bluff RD., Pasadena. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu).

MON., FEB. 20: STORYTIME IN THE GARDEN, 10:30-11:30 am, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160.

SAT. FEB 25: TOMATO TIPS with TOM LEROY, Enchanted Forest 10am - 10611 FM 2759, Richmond - 281-937-9449; Enchanted Gardens 2pm - 6420 FM 359, Richmond - 281-341-1206 Free. [myenchanted.com](http://myenchanted.com)

THURS., MAR. 2: STROLLER STROLLS, 9am, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160.

SAT., MAR. 4: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER TOMATO-PEPPER SALE, Bear Creek Garden, 3033 Bear Creek Dr. 281-855-5600

SAT., MAR. 4: LANDSCAPING MADE SIMPLE by Landscape Designers, Enchanted Forest 10am - 10611 FM 2759, Richmond - 281-937-9449; Enchanted Gardens 2pm - 6420 FM 359, Richmond - 281-341-1206 Free. [myenchanted.com](http://myenchanted.com)

WED., MAR. 8: MARCH MART PREVIEW, noon- 2pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160.

SAT., SUN., MAR. 4-5: SPRING BRANCH AFRICAN VIOLET CLUB 37TH ANNUAL SHOW & SPRING SALE, Sat. Show 1-5pm, Sale 9am-5pm; Sun. Show & Sale, 10am-3pm; workshop Sat. & Sun. 1pm, Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center, 2020 Hermann Park Dr. Free. 281-748-8417, [kjwross@yahoo.com](mailto:kjwross@yahoo.com)

FRI.-SUN., MAR. 10-12: 82nd ANNUAL AZALEA TRAIL: BLOOMS OF SPRING IN FULL SWING, 11am-5pm, River Oaks Garden Club event. [riveroaksgardenclub.org](http://riveroaksgardenclub.org)

SAT., MAR. 11: MARCH MART PREVIEW (Repeat), 10am-noon, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160.

SAT., MAR. 11: THE EXPERTS ARE HERE--MIKE SERANT, JOHN FERGUSON, DAN SNYDER & L. P. KOJIS, Enchanted Forest 10am -10611 FM 2759, Richmond - 281-937-9449; Enchanted Gardens 2pm - 6420 FM 359, Richmond - 281-341-1206 Free. [myenchanted.com](http://myenchanted.com)

MON, MAR. 13: PLANT NOW FOR GREAT WILDSAPES by DIANA FOSS, 6:30pm , Forest Room (BB1418), Bayou Building, University of Houston Clear Lake, 2700 Bay Area Blvd. Free, \$5 parking. Native Plant Society of Texas (NPSOT)/Clear Lake Chapter event. [npsot.org/wp/clearlake/](http://npsot.org/wp/clearlake/)

SAT., MAR. 18: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER SPRING PLANT SALE, Genoa Friendship Garden, Campbell Hall, Pasadena Fairgrounds. 281-855-5600

SAT., MARCH 18: GREAT GULF COAST PLANTS FOR SUN OR SHADE with Linda Gay Enchanted Forest 10am - 10611 FM 2759, Richmond - 281-937-9449; Enchanted Gardens 2pm - 6420 FM 359, Richmond - 281-341-1206 Free. [myenchanted.com](http://myenchanted.com)

SAT., MARCH 25: JOIN THE PERENNIAL PLANT MOVEMENT, Enchanted Forest 10am - 10611 FM 2759, Richmond - 281-937-9449; Enchanted Gardens 2pm - 6420 FM 359, Richmond - 281-341-1206 Free. [myenchanted.com](http://myenchanted.com)

SAT., APRIL 1.: WHITE OAK GARDEN SPRING PLANT SALE, 9am program by HEIDI SHEESLEY, 10am-2pm (or till sold out) sale, White Oak Conference Center, 7603 Antoine Dr. [nnmd.org](http://nnmd.org)

MON., APRIL 3-MAY 1: LANDSCAPE FOR LIFE, 9am-noon, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. \$150. Register: 713-274-4160.

THURS., APRIL 6: STROLLER GARDEN STROLLS, 9-10am, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160.

SAT., APRIL 8: PLANNING AND PLANTING A HABITAT GARDEN by NANCY GRIEG,- Enchanted Forest 10am - 10611 FM 2759, Richmond - 281-937-9449 - Enchanted Garden 2pm - 6420 FM 359, Richmond 281-341-1206 free. [myenchanted.com](http://myenchanted.com)

WED., APRIL 12: GARDENING IN SMALL SPACES, noon-2pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160.

APR. 22: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER SPRING PERENNIAL SALE, Bear Creek Garden, 3033 Bear Creek Dr. 281-855-5600

SAT., APRIL 22: POOLSIDE CONTAINERS AND IDEAS, Enchanted Forest 10am - 10611 FM 2759, Richmond - 281-937-9449; Enchanted Gardens 2pm - 6420 FM 359, Richmond - 281-341-1206 free. [myenchanted.com](http://myenchanted.com)

SAT., APRIL 29: FAIRY GARDEN SEMINARS, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, 281-937-9449; 2pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, 281-341-1206, both Richmond. \$10+. [myenchanted.com](http://myenchanted.com)

THURS., MAY 4: STROLLER GARDEN STROLLS, 9-11am, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160.

SAT. MAY 6: CUT FLOWER GARDEN by SONI HOLIDAY, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, 281-937-9449; 2pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, 281-341-1206, both Richmond. [myenchanted.com](http://myenchanted.com)

WED., MAY 10: WORM COMPOSTING, noon - 2pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160.

FRI., MAY 12: BLOOMING BONNETS LUNCHEON, 11am - 1pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. \$25. Register: 713-274-4160.

SAT. MAY 13: MOTHER'S DAY MAKE & TAKE FLOWERS/CRAFT MARKETS, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, 281-937-9449; 2pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, 281-341-1206, both Richmond. \$10+. [myenchanted.com](http://myenchanted.com)

SAT., MAY 20: MINI SUCCULENT OR HERB GARDEN, 10am, Enchanted Forest, 10611 FM 2759, 281-937-9449; 2pm, Enchanted Gardens, 6420 FM 359, 281-341-1206, both Richmond. [myenchanted.com](http://myenchanted.com)

THURS., JUNE 1: STROLLER GARDEN STROLLS, 9-10am, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160.

WED., JUNE 14: CARNIVOROUS PLANTS, noon-2pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 22306 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. Register: 713-274-4160.

OCT. 7: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER FALL PLANT SALE, Bear Creek Garden, 3033 Bear Creek Dr. 281-855-5600

**If we inspire you to attend any of these events, please let them know you heard about it in . . .  
THE LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS NEWSLETTER!**

**PLEASE READ BEFORE SUBMITTING AN EVENT FOR THIS CALENDAR.**

Events **NOT** submitted in the **EXACT** written format below may take two weeks or longer to be reformatted/retyped. After that point, if your event does not appear, please email us. Sorry, no children's programs. - Submit to: [lazygardener@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lazygardener@sbcglobal.net)

**IF WE INSPIRE YOU TO ATTEND ANY OF THESE EVENTS, PLEASE TELL SPONSORS YOU HEARD ABOUT IT IN  
THE LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER**

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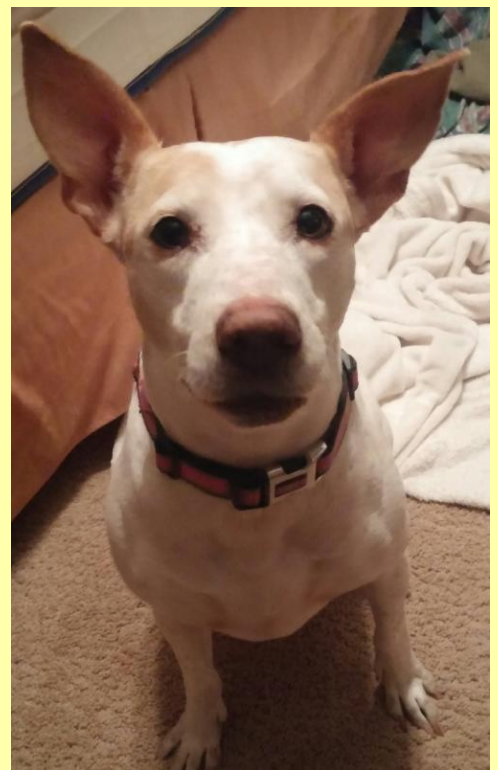
## ADOPTABLE DOG OF THE MONTH

### PEGGY SUE

Please Help Peggy Sue Get Adopted. She is a super sweet Pointer Mix and former shelter dog. She is about three years old. She has been spayed and is current on her shots. She is very social and plays well with other dogs and people including children. She is very mellow most of the time but does love to play and be silly in spurts. She is house trained and is not destructive in nature. She does need a companion dog.

The local rescue A Chance To Bloom helped us save her from the shelter initially, they helped her adapt to life outside of the shelter and helped socialize her. Now they are helping us to find a loving forever home. She is currently in the care of her foster who is unfortunately very maxed out with his own adopted former shelter dogs. Peggy Sue is a super special dog that is sure to bring her future family some really good kisses and good times in general.

If interested, please contact [A Chance To Bloom](#) or her foster Mark Bowen at [markbowenhoutx@gmail.com](mailto:markbowenhoutx@gmail.com)



## ABOUT US

### BRENDA BEUST SMITH

WE KNOW HER BEST AS THE LAZY GARDENER . . .

. . . but Brenda Beust Smith is also:

- \* a national award-winning writer & editor
- \* a nationally-published writer & photographer
- \* a national horticultural speaker
- \* a former Houston Chronicle reporter

When the Chronicle discontinued Brenda 's 45-year-old "Lazy Gardener" print column a couple of years ago, it ranked as the longest-running, continuously-published local newspaper column in the Greater Houston area.

Brenda 's gradual sideways step from Chronicle reporter into gardening writing led first to an 18-year series of when-to-do-what Lazy Gardener Calendars, then to her *Lazy Gardener's Guide* book and now to her *Lazy Gardener's Guide* on CD (which retails for \$20. However, \$5 of every sale is returned to the sponsoring group at her speaking engagements).

A Harris County Master Gardener, Brenda has served on the boards of many Greater Houston area horticulture organizations and has hosted local radio and TV shows, most notably a 10+-year Lazy Gardener run on HoustonPBS (Ch. 8) and her call-in "EcoGardening" show on KPFT-FM.

Brenda recently ended her decades-long stint as Production Manager of the Garden Club of America's **BULLETIN** magazine. Although still an active horticulture lecturer and broad-based freelance writer, Brenda's main focus now is **THE LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER** with John Ferguson and Mark Bowen of Nature's Way Resources.

A native of New Orleans and graduate of St. Agnes Academy and the University of Houston, Brenda lives in Aldine and is married to the now retired Aldine High School Coach Bill Smith. They have one son, Blake.

Regarding this newsletter, Brenda is the lead writer, originator of it and the daily inspiration for it. We so appreciate the way she has made gardening such a fun way to celebrate life together for such a long time.

### JOHN FERGUSON

John is a native Houstonian and has over 27 years of business experience. He owns Nature's Way Resources, a composting company that specializes in high quality compost, mulch, and soil mixes. He holds a MS degree in Physics and Geology and is a licensed Soil Scientist in Texas.

John has won many awards in horticulture and environmental issues. He represents the composting industry on the Houston-Galveston Area Council for solid waste. His personal garden has been featured in several horticultural books and "Better Homes and Gardens" magazine. His business has been recognized in the Wall Street Journal for the quality and value of their products. He is a member of the Physics Honor

Society and many other professional societies. John is the co-author of the book *Organic Management for the Professional*.

For this newsletter, John contributes articles regularly and is responsible for publishing it.

## MARK BOWEN

Mark is a native Houstonian, a horticulturist, certified permaculturist and organic specialist with a background in garden design, land restoration and organic project management. He is currently the general manager of Nature's Way Resources. Mark is also the co-author of the book *Habitat Gardening for Houston and Southeast Texas*, the author of the book *Naturalistic Landscaping for the Gulf Coast*, co-author of the *Bayou Planting Guide* and contributing landscape designer for the book *Landscaping Homes: Texas*.

With respect to this newsletter, Mark serves as a co-editor and periodic article contributor.

## PABLO HERNANDEZ

Pablo Hernandez is the special projects coordinator for Nature's Way Resources. His realm of responsibilities include: serving as a webmaster, IT support, technical problem solving/troubleshooting, metrics management, quality control, and he is a certified compost facility operator.

Pablo helps this newsletter happen from a technical support standpoint.



**COUPON: Nature's Way Resources. 50% OFF Pomegranates & Pears at Nature's Way Resources (expires 1/29/17)**

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